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SUBJECT: BENIN BORDER ARREST OF TWO CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC  
NATIONALS

¶1. (U) On November 27, Beninese media reported the recent arrest by Beninese Customs of two Central African Republic nationals at the Benin/Togo border. According to the media reports, Michel Djotodia and Abakar Sabone are reportedly wanted for their role in an attempted coup in the Central African Republic (CAR) earlier this year and continued rebel activity. The reports state that Interpol Bangui had alerted Beninese Customs officials that the two had been staying in Benin for approximately six months.

¶2. (U) Apparently the two men had traveled to Togo two months ago, because they had been told that Interpol had developed information on their presence in Benin. Thinking that the situation had calmed down in Benin, the two attempted to cross back into Benin sometime last week at which time they were captured by Beninese authorities. The media further reported that officials from the Central African Republic have been in contact with Benin in efforts to extradite the two back to the CAR. Reuters reports that the CAR rebels have threatened a new offensive within the CAR if the two are not released.

¶3. (SBU) Police contacts have advised the Regional Security Office that the two men were brought before a Prosecutor in Cotonou on November 24, and the Prosecutor ordered them to be held in jail. A Central African colleague of the Beninese Prosecutor is traveling from Bangui to Benin to arrange for the two men to be extradited back to the Central African Republic.

BROWN